



THE TWELVE-STEP REVIEW

Fr. Emmerich Vogt, O.P.



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Dear friends,

Here are some up-and-coming retreats and parish missions for the New Year:

- * 11 - 16 January, 2014. Mission: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Carmel, IN.
- * 3 - 6 February, 2014. Mission: Holy Trinity Parish, Gainesville, VA.
- * 7 - 9 February, 2014. Retreat: Malvern Retreat House, Philadelphia, PA.

- * 17- 20 February, 2014. Mission: Resurrection Parish, Nashua, NH.
- * 20 - 21 February. Retreat: St. Benedict Abbey, Still River, MA.
- * 3 - 6 March, 2014. Mission: St. Ann Parish, Florence, SC.
- * 17 - 20 March, 2014. Mission: Immaculate Conception, North Delta, British Columbia, Canada.
- * 24 - 27 March, 2014. Mission: Assumption Parish, Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada.

- * 31 March - 3 April, 2014. Mission: Corpus Christi Parish, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- * 7 - 10 April, 2014. Mission: Christ the Redeemer Parish, West Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Because schedules change, please check with the institution.

God bless all our readers who support this apostolate! *

The Emotion of Anger

Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that being insensitive to our feelings and emotions is a vice (ST II-II, Q92, Art. 1). The passions (feelings and emotions) are a part of human life.

The early desert monks relate a story about a fellow monk's gradual awareness of the true nature of his anger. The story goes that when he had finally had enough of those who caused his anger, he fled further out into the desert to live by himself, in total isolation from trouble and trouble-makers. This, he thought, would preserve his peace of soul. He would no longer have to live with anger. He found himself a suitable cave and there took up his life of peaceful solitude. Before long, however, his anger returned. One day, after a journey of some distance to the nearby spring, he

filled his terracotta jug, but once back in his cave, it accidentally overturned and all the contents spilled out. He patiently journeyed back to the spring for a refill. But once again his carelessness tipped the jug over. Trying to maintain his cool, he made the journey yet again. Back in the cave, the jug once again tipped over. And he flew into a rage, picked up the jug and threw it, smashing it against the wall of the cave.

Later that day at the evening prayer called Vespers, feeling guilty about his rage, he prostrated himself before the Lord and repented of his outburst. The Lord revealed to him that the battle of his anger lay within himself. He packed up his sparse

All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Ephesians 4:31-32

belongings and returned to his monastery.

The real solution was the interior struggle against self. As with all sin, there is always present the primary sin of pride. Wounded egos have a way of taking out their frustrations on others. Hurt people hurt people and are easily slighted by others. The Book of Proverbs tells us, "Fools immediately show their anger, but the shrewd conceal contempt" (12:16). What should be a passion for justice often turns out to be a passion for vengeance because of ego-centric self-interest. This is sinful anger. But not all anger is sinful.

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INSPIRATION FROM THE SAINTS

BLESSED GILES OF PORTUGAL. The Saints come from all kinds of backgrounds, with all kinds of sinful behaviors before their conversion. In the Parable of the Workers of the Vineyard, Jesus demonstrates the mercy and generosity of God who pays the same wage to the one who started early in the day as to the one who came later in the day. Some Saints were dedicated to the Lord from their youth, like St. Therese; some came to work for the Lord at midday, like St. Augustine, who was in his early thirties. Some came in the afternoon of their lives, like St. Mary of Egypt, and some made it into the Kingdom at the evening of life, like St. Dismas. How beautiful the mercy of God! And we have Saints caught up in devilish lives like Blessed Bartolo Longo, who was ordained a Satanist priest before his conversion.



Blessed Giles shared similarities with Bartolo Longo. His life story is one of the triumph of grace in the human soul through the motherly intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Giles was born to a Christian family in Portugal. He never took his faith seriously at all; to the contrary, he became irreligious and hedonistic. His contemporary biographer tells us that as a young man, heading to Paris for medical studies, Giles was met by a stranger who encouraged him to become a student of the black arts. As payment, the stranger required that Giles commit his soul to the devil and sign the contract with his blood. This, his friend assured him, would promise him success in his medical pursuits. Giles agreed, and after devoting some time to the study of magic under the direction of Satan, he went to Paris, easily obtained the degree of doctor of medicine, and performed many wonderful cures. Many a night, however, while all alone in his room, he would have fearful visions. These frightful visions led Giles to change his wicked life.

Giles returned to Portugal, where he was received into the Dominican Order (only recently founded) in the newly-erected priory at Palencia, about 1221. Shortly after, his superiors sent him to the Dominican house at Scallabis, the present Santarém, where he led a life of prayer and penance. But for several years his mind was tormented by the thought of the contract which was still in the hands of Satan. Finally, his biographer tells us, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the devil was compelled to surrender the contract. Freed from his obsession, Giles returned to Paris to study theology, and on his return to Portugal became famous for his piety and learning.



Blessed Giles occupied several positions of authority in the Dominican Order, including provincial of Portugal, and his medical skills proved to be a blessing in the care of the sick friars. In his humility he made a practice of going about their rooms, cleaning them while they were at class. His heroic penance did much to undo the scandal he had caused in his early years. He was twice elected provincial of his order in Spain. He died at Santarém, Portugal, at a very old age. During his lifetime he was regarded by many as a saintly man. Pope Benedict XIV beatified him on March 9, 1748.

BLESSED GILES, PRAY FOR US !

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FATHER EMMERICH'S PAMPHLET SERIES:

\$1.00 each., plus shipping and handling. Call for bulk orders. Good for parish pamphlet racks.

1. *The Passions*: deals with the role of our feeling and emotions.
2. *Friendship with Christ*: explains the Christian nature of friendship and its importance for healing and recovery.
3. *Sexual Sobriety*: explores recovery from the sin of lust and the need for chastity in Christian life.
4. *The 12-Step Series*: a series of separate pamphlets, one for each of the 12 steps.

THE RULE OF OUR WARFARE. These conferences continue the very popular “Detaching with Love” series. Fr. Emmerich’s 12-step approach to life and trials will give you encouragement in the hard work of overcoming self to continue on the path of recovery from the effects of sin. Five conferences, plus homilies, on 6 CDs. \$35.00, plus shipping and handling.

SISTER IGNATIA: Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous is the true story of a Sister of Charity of St. Augustine who, driven by a strong need for perfection and unable to recognize her deep fear of failure, eventually had a total physical and mental breakdown. After her own recovery, she began to help the founders of AA with treating alcoholics at St. Thomas Hospital where she established Rosary Hall, the first treatment center for alcoholics. A wonderful, inspiring, and true story that gives insights into the beginnings of the 12-step movement and the miracles God worked through one person’s sufferings. Softcover, 300 pp., \$18.95, plus shipping and handling. Second edition.

ADDICTION AND GRACE. Drawing on his experience as a psychiatrist working with the chemically dependent, Dr. May emphasizes that addiction represents an attempt to assert complete control over our lives. *Addiction and Grace* is a compassionate and wise treatment of a topic of major concern in these most addictive of times, one that can provide a critical yet hopeful guide to a place of freedom based on contemplative spirituality. Softcover, \$14.99, plus shipping and handling.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT SEX AND MARRIAGE: Answers to Your Honest Questions about Catholic Teaching. Christopher West’s book taps into the desire we all have for deep spirituality and an integrated life. He draws upon his own remarkable life experience and his theological training to shape answers to the most sublime and some of the most gritty questions spouses are likely to have. Those who adopt the principles of the book can have much happier marriages. Paperback, 191 pp., \$11.95, plus shipping and handling.

THE WOUNDED HEART: HOPE FOR ADULT VICTIMS OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE. Studies indicate that 38% of the women interviewed had been sexually abused by an adult or family member by the age of 18. You may think you don’t know anyone who has been sexually abused, especially if most of your friends and acquaintances are Christians. But the statistics indicate otherwise: Sexual abuse knows no religious or social boundaries. *The Wounded Heart* is an intensely personal and specific look at this most “soul-deadening” form of abuse. Personal because it may be affecting you, your spouse, a close friend or neighbor, or someone you know well at church. And specific because it goes well beyond the general issues and solutions discussed in other books. Dr. Allender’s book reaches deep into the wounded heart of someone you know, exploring the secret lament of the soul damaged by sexual abuse—and laying hold of the hope buried there by the One whose unstained image we all bear. Paperback, 301 pp., \$16.95, plus shipping and handling.

Order online www.12-step-review.org. Or call us toll free at: 800-556-6177.

Anger can be good when we channel it to effect positive actions in our lives. Anger over injustice can lead us to advocate for changes in laws and policies to the good of people. This was the case with MADD. Candy Lightner founded Mothers Against Drunk Driving after her daughter, Cari, was killed by a drunk driver who was a repeat offender. Cindi Lamb joined with Candy after her own daughter became the nation's youngest quadriplegic at the hands of a drunk driver. These women channeled their anger into founding one of the most widely-supported and well-liked nonprofit organizations in America, which has had a tremendous impact on curbing the evil of drunk driving.

Their anger was praiseworthy because, as St. Thomas notes, "... if one is angry in accordance with right reason, one's anger is deserving of praise." St. Thomas teaches that one can sin with regard to anger in two ways, by excess or by defect: by excess when we act out of the anger in a sinful rage; by defect when we stuff the anger and become depressed instead of allowing the anger to express itself in a good and holy way.

Anger can lead us to setting goals and taking steps to change behavior and better ourselves and others. Anger over mistakes can lead to humility. Thus does St. Paul instruct, "Be angry but sin not" (Ephesians 4:26). We can see St. Paul's point in the life of our Lord. Because some people were abusing His Father's house, Jesus made a whip out of rope and in anger chased them out of the temple. St. Thomas notes that Jesus, in His human nature, had a full complement of emotions—but without sin. There is no moral component to how we feel. Rather, sin lies in the will—in what we do about how we feel. Anger is no sin under three conditions:

1. If the cause of the anger is just.
2. If it is no greater than the cause demands.
3. If, once the action demanded by the situation is taken care of, we let go of the anger.

Christian behavior teaches against the anger that seeks to get even, for this anger only destroys civilized life. Thus did our Lord teach us to forgive our enemies.

The Emotion of Fear

As with all emotions, fear is not wrong. There is no moral component to how we feel. Feelings and emotions are morally neutral. What gives them a moral component is what we do about them: we perfect them with virtue or pervert them with vice. And so it is with fear. If we allow fear to make our decisions for us instead of perfecting the emotion with the virtue of courage, we sin by not doing the right thing, by letting fear make our decision.

Fear is the normal response to genuine danger. Phobias are irrational fears and are based in psychological responses to apparent threats. For example, we hear

of agoraphobia: fear of being in any situation where escape seems difficult. A social phobia is where a person fears being humiliated while doing something in front of others (as in the movie "Little Voice"). Any phobia that interferes with one's duties and responsibilities needs to be healed. As a feeling, fear is not wrong; it is wrong when we allow these fears to control our lives, preventing us

from doing what is right. A person can learn to control the emotional reaction of fear. By learning to confront rather than fleeing the object of fear, the person becomes accustomed to it and doesn't allow it to make his decisions.

The dread eventually dissipates. However, this is for those fears that keep us from doing what is morally good. Some fears people simply have to live with, as with arachnophobia: the fear of spiders. 🕸️

- "There is a holy anger, excited by zeal, which moves us to reprove with warmth those whom our mildness failed to correct."

St. LaSalle (18th century)

- "We must not fear fear."

St. Francis de Sales (17th century)

- "Fear God and you shall have no need to fear people."

English Proverb

- "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty."

Psalms 16:32



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2001 NW 94th Street

Vancouver, WA 98665

1-800-556-6177

www.12-step-review.org

